DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 373 407 EA 026 016

AUTHOR Astuto, Terry A.; Clark, David L.
TITLE Projection of State Policy Initiatives for the 1990's.
INSTITUTION North Carolina Educational Policy Research Center, Chapel Hill.
SPONS AGENCY North Carolina State Board of Education, Raleigh.
PUB DATE Dec 91
CONTRACT 0800000738
NOTE 22p.
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070)

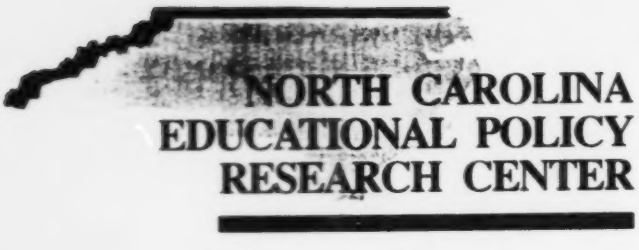
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS At Risk Persons; Child Health; Child Welfare; Curriculum Development; Educational Finance; *Educational Policy; *Educational Trends; Elementary Secondary Education; School Choice; School Restructuring; *State Action; *State Legislation
IDENTIFIERS *North Carolina

ABSTRACT

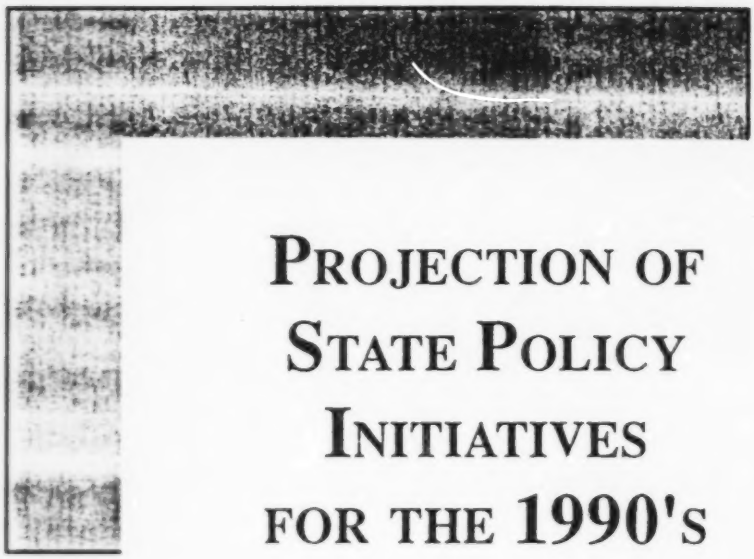
State boards of education are routinely placed in the challenging position of reacting to emerging problems or responding to policy proposals generated by other actors in the policy arena. This policy briefing paper was written to help members of the North Carolina Board of Education identify educational policy issues they are likely to confront by the end of the 1990s. Data were derived from: (1) an inventory of policy options under consideration in other states; (2) analysis of evaluation reports of recently adopted initiatives; (3) discussions with policy experts; and (4) a review of North Carolina demographic data. The paper describes educational policy initiatives that are emerging in three critical areas--improving the conditions of children and youth, improving schools, and improving state support systems for education. In conclusion, three driving forces will demand educational policy responses throughout the decade--crisis in the lives of American children and youth (who are placed at risk by poverty, racism, and poor health), changes in the social structure, and national pressure to improve schools. State educational policymakers will confront problems that will be national in scope and extend beyond education to include health, social welfare, and economic development. (LMI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 373 407



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.



PROJECTION OF STATE POLICY INITIATIVES FOR THE 1990'S

School of Education
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
T. Suarez
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

EA026016

For further information regarding this report, contact:

Tanya M. Suarez, Director
North Carolina Educational Policy Research Center
105A Peabody Hall, CB #3500
School of Education
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3500
(919) 962-2655

The North Carolina Educational Policy Research Center operates under contract No. 0800000738 with the North Carolina State Board of Education. The funding source for the contract is Chapter 2 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The objective of the contract is to better enable the State Board of Education to assist local education agencies in improving student achievement.

PROJECTION OF STATE POLICY INITIATIVES FOR THE 1990'S

TERRY A. ASTUTO
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
AND
DAVID L. CLARK
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

DECEMBER, 1991

Projection of State Policy Initiatives for the 1990s

State boards of education are placed routinely in the challenging position of reacting to emerging problems or responding to policy proposals generated by other actors in the policy arena. The purpose of this policy briefing paper is to assist the members of the North Carolina Board of Education in identifying educational policy issues that are likely to require discussion and possible action by:

- predicting the range of education policy problems that state level policy makers in North Carolina are likely to confront in the near future (i.e., prior to the end of the 1990's); and,

- projecting a set of policy initiatives that will require serious consideration.

Initiatives likely to need attention in the near future were identified by: (1) inventorying policy options currently under consideration in states other than North Carolina; (2) examining evaluation reports that have been completed on recently adopted initiatives; (3) talking to policy experts about emerging issues that are being discussed among state-level policy makers; and (4) reviewing demographic data relevant to North Carolina. Analysis of this information highlighted education policy initiatives that are emerging in three critical areas -- improving the condition of children and youth, improving schools, and improving state support systems for education.

Improving the Conditions of Children & Youth

Societal and economic conditions are not conducive to the growth and development of America's children. Thirteen million children live in poverty.[1] Almost 20% of all children and 30% of children in large cities live in poverty[2] and these percentages are increasing yearly. The effects of poverty are experienced in poor housing, health, and nutrition, all of which affect learning and growing.

The full range of contemporary societal problems touch the lives of children. Maternal alcohol and substance abuse is affecting at least 375,000 babies each year.[3] The percentage of babies who test positive for HIV is already alarming and is predicted to grow dramatically over the next decade.[4] More young people are incarcerated in prison or youth detention facilities.[5] Violent crimes are taking more adolescent lives. More teenage boys die of gunshot wounds than of all natural causes combined.[6]

State policy makers are beginning to turn their attention to discussions of comprehensive youth policies and educational policy makers are grappling with ways of

improving the conditions of children as an essential component of policies to improve children's learning experiences. Policy discussions are emerging around the topics of child health, child care and early education, and the educational effects of racism in society.

Child Health

Almost 40,000 American babies die before their first birthday.[7] The infant mortality rate in the U.S. exceeds those in 21 of the 23 major industrialized countries. Our rate is lower than only those of Portugal and Greece.[8] In 1987, the US infant mortality rate was 10.1 deaths per 1000 live births; the infant mortality rate among US Blacks was 17.9 deaths per 1000 live births. North Carolina ranks 49th with an infant mortality rate of 12.5 deaths per 1000 births.[9] The percentage of low birthweight babies has remained at 6.9% for the past decade but the percentage of low birthweight Black babies has increased to 13.0%.[10] North Carolina ranks 43rd, with 8.0% of its newborns characterized as low birth weight babies. The Census Bureau reports that the number of Americans without health insurance coverage (either public or private) grew from 29.9 million in 1989 to 37.4 million in 1987.[11] About 62% of uninsured are in families where at least one member works full-time; about 70% of the uninsured are in families with incomes above the poverty line.[12] The 37 million Americans with no health insurance includes more than 12 million children and nearly half of all poor children do not receive medicaid.[13] In North Carolina, 22.8% of children are not covered by health insurance.

The poor health of America's children results in large part from (1) lack of access to health care for prevention and treatment; (2) lack of information and resources regarding health and nutrition; and (3) poor nutrition resulting from poverty.

Policy proposals in California, Florida, and Wisconsin represent efforts to increase access to health care:

- A proposal by California Governor Pete Wilson would establish a public and private program to enable low income women to purchase insurance for prenatal and maternity services. Additionally, a "Healthy Start" program would provide school districts with new funding to integrate county run health and social service programs into the schools.

- A Florida proposal would pilot test a novel health insurance program for school children designed to increase the access of uninsured children to health care. Governor Chiles has also proposed a plan to provide every mother and child with prenatal care and adequate labor and delivery services.

- Wisconsin's Commission for the 21st Century proposed the establishment of community councils to coordinate health, social, and educational services for children.

Schools have responded historically to child health needs by: requiring immunization as a prerequisite to enrollment; providing school nurses to give emergency care and to act as a liaison between the school, the family, and community health services, and including health education as a standard element of the school curriculum. Current policy discussions continue to utilize these traditional strategies.

- Arkansas legislators have lowered the nurse-student ratio in the state's public schools and approved the Governor's health department budget including new school based health clinics that will be allowed to distribute contraceptives.

- Due to the re-emergence of the problem of high blood lead levels, Massachusetts has required testing for blood lead level for entry to kindergarten.

- Cholesterol screening for students in grades 4-12 in California was proposed by the legislature but vetoed by the Governor.

In addition to routine health needs, today's children are confronted with the problems associated with alcohol and substance abuse -- their own and/or their parents'. From 1985-1988 the number of children born with drug exposure quadrupled. In a national survey, members of the graduating class of 1989 reported using the following at least once: cigarettes, 65.7%; alcohol, 90.7%; marijuana, 50.9%; other drugs, 19.5%.[14] Sher (1991) reported that over 500,000 North Carolinians have alcohol or drug-related problems serious enough to have caused productivity losses, triggered domestic violence, warranted medical attention, caused accidents, or resulted in criminal behavior.[15] Many states already require some form of drug education or have developed programs to provide children with information about the effects of drug and alcohol abuse. Discussions now are centered on increased programs of education and treatment. For example:

- An Idaho proposal would provide treatment for drug and alcohol exposed babies.

- Nevada policy makers considered funding for substance abuse counselors to serve school districts.

- California's policy makers discussed providing mental health counseling in elementary schools to detect and treat emotional and psychological problems as early as possible. The Governor proposed treatment of drug abusing women and drug education for middle and high school students.

Finally, state policy makers are wrestling with the design of educational programs for children and youth related to sex and family life. This concern arises from both the number of teenage pregnancies and the AIDS epidemic.

Teenage pregnancy places the new baby and the teen mother at risk. In 1980, 271,801 babies were born to teen mothers, representing 7.5 percent of all births. By 1988, that number rose to 322,406, 8.2% of all births. North Carolina ranks 7th in percent of births to teen mothers.[16] Babies born to teen mothers experience disproportionate health problems due in part to low birth weight. And the mothers themselves are more likely to drop out of school and become trapped in a cycle of poverty and unemployment.

Approximately 75% of young women and 86% of young men are sexually active by the time they reach 19. Approximately 25% of all teenagers contract a sexually transmitted disease (STD) before they graduate from high school.[17] According to the Centers for Disease Control, more teenagers are contracting AIDS resulting from sexual activity and many of the 34,000 young adults with AIDS are likely to have been infected as teenagers.[18]

Policy proposals in response to these needs are often bogged down in controversy:

- In California, the legislature passed a bill requiring middle and high school students to receive AIDS education, but the proposed legislation was vetoed by the Governor.

- After much debate, the New York State Board of Education voted unanimously to uphold its current AIDS education policy, neither mandating nor preventing the distribution of condoms in the state's public schools.

- Iowa's Governor vetoed a bill that would have enabled schools to teach after-school parenting classes, claiming the plan could boost property taxes.

Despite the controversy surrounding solutions, the severity of the problems that give rise to the need for such programs is such that state educational policy makers will be faced with inventing and reacting to proposed solutions throughout the decade of the 90s.

Child Care and Early Childhood Education

Strategies to promote the early growth and development of children are complicated by the changing condition of American families and communities. Increasing numbers of single-parent families and families in which both parents work coupled with less tightly-knit community contexts create a demand for safe, supportive, and affordable child care services. Adult supervision in a caring environment is needed for pre-school children and for young children during the hours and days when school is not in session. Responding to tragic examples of abuse and mistreatment of children, many states are increasing regulations for private providers. But, proactive policy proposals for ongoing, developmental child care initiatives are receiving little attention.

On the other hand, the expansion of early education programs has become a popular policy option. Evidence of the efficacy of early intervention programs for poor and handicapped children and the belief that earlier formal learning opportunities will prepare children for more successful educational experiences have led to a variety of policy proposals and initiatives such as:

- Increasing the availability of preschool programs for handicapped and at-risk children (e.g., Arizona, Arkansas, California, Washington);
- Providing preschool and child care programs for all four year old children by 1995 (Indiana);
- Requiring full-day kindergarten programs for all five year olds and optional, half-day programs for four year olds (recommendation of the Wisconsin Commission on Schools for the 21st Century);
- Lowering the compulsory school attendance age to five (Maryland).

Few policy discussions target children younger than four. However, a California proposal included discussions of a tax credit for families with annual incomes of up to $40,000 in which a parent stayed home to care for an infant.

Changing conditions and patterns of American family life will create the demand for state policies to expand child care opportunities. The Governors' goal that "by the year 2000 all children will start school ready to learn" will keep alive demands for state initiatives in early childhood education.

Racism and Its Effects

Children of color, especially Black males, are more likely to be suspended or expelled from school and/or placed in special education programs and vocational curricula.

They are least likely to: be placed in gifted and talented programs or academic tracks in high school; receive adequate math, science, and social studies in high school; and, have adequate access to computers. They are more likely drop out of school.[19] As a consequence of both poverty and racism, Black males are likely to be unemployed or under-employed, be victims of violent crimes, suffer poor health, reside in substandard housing, and live with problems connected with alcohol or substance abuse. Schools are failing children of color. Local school districts are attempting to provide specialized educational programs, teacher education programs are incorporating the study of multiculturalism, and national advocates are articulating and providing evidence of the problem. Yet, not much is happening in the state education policy arena.

- In Connecticut, the Governor's Commission on Quality and Integrated Education has called for a series of desegregation measures that include state funding for two-way interdistrict student transfers; setting of targets for increased student participation in the interdistrict transfer program; expansion of the regional vocational technical school system; implementation of foreign exchange projects in teacher preparation programs as well as other steps to promote multicultural education.

- In Minnesota, the State Board of Education approved a statewide desegregation plan to end white students' cultural isolation, give minorities more leeway to control their own schools, and require suburban districts to take steps toward racial integration.

The failure of schools to provide meaningful educational experiences for children of color and poor children is the real crisis confronting American education. Since poverty and racism are linked, the need to confront racism and its effects will continue to escalate throughout the decade.

IMPROVING SCHOOLS

States have become more active partners with local school districts in designing programs and policies to foster improvement in elementary and secondary schools. Emerging initiatives focus on school structures, school personnel, school outcomes, and curriculum.

Restructuring Schools

Discussions and policy proposals at the state level to restructure schools are focused on state support for local efforts to restructure schools and increasing parental choice of schools.

State Support for Local Efforts. State policies and programs are encouraging and supporting local efforts to restructure schools through demonstration or pilot projects, waivers of state regulations, and allocation of seed money for pilot projects at the local level.

- In Georgia, the Governor pushed legislation to give local school districts more flexibility and autonomy than they currently have under the state's Quality Basic Education Program.

- In Tennessee, the Governor's 21st Century Challenge Program includes a comprehensive school restructuring plan.

- A proposal in the State of Washington would eliminate most state education standards and requirements and replace them with statewide performance standards to be developed by a new state commission.

- Governor Thompson of Wisconsin proposed a plan to permit schools to obtain waivers from state regulations that hindered their ability to try innovative education programs.

- Indiana's Governor proposed establishment of "Discovery Schools" that would allow educators to individualize learning, use nonstandard methods, and enhance parental involvement.

- Policy makers in Minnesota granted regulatory relief for restructuring. Under the waiver, the district will be allowed to set its own graduation requirements and is granted more flexibility in setting standards for grade advancement, in setting students' daily schedules, in allowing teachers to teach in areas outside their certification. The district must submit annual reports on its restructuring efforts.

Parental Choice. Strategies to increase the opportunities for parents to choose the schools their children will attend has continued as a popular policy option. Arkansas, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Ohio previously passed choice legislation. In 1990, similar legislation was adopted in Idaho and Utah. Different forms of choice were also approved:

- Colorado approved a law providing students the right to transfer to other schools in their own district, space permitting.

- Washington created an open enrollment program which included mechanisms for input from teachers and principals regarding school choices.

- The Wisconsin legislature adopted a voucher type plan to allow up to 1000 Milwaukee public school students to enroll in private, nonsectarian schools at state expense.

Similar proposals were discussed but not approved in numerous other states. Additionally, home schooling continues to be on the policy agenda. In Iowa, the House passed a measure to allow parents to teach their children at home as long as the home schooled students passed annual progress tests or provided evidence of their work.

Parental choice of schools has been a key element of the federal education policy agenda since the Reagan years. The press for school choice is one of the specific reform recommendations included in America 2000. Unquestionably, policy proposals related to choice will continue to require consideration by state policy makers.

School Personnel

In the recent past, policies to recruit, retain, and/or improve the performance of school personnel were popular on the state educational policy agenda. During the past year, two conflicting initiatives attracted attention -- proposals for alternative routes to teaching or administering schools and support for state-level professional standards boards.

- Georgia's Governor sought a transfer of responsibility for teacher certification from the state education department to a state-level professional standards board.

- In Vermont, local standards boards for teachers were established to guide professional development and make recommendations for relicensing.

- Maryland and Oklahoma policy makers adopted an alternative certification policy that would allow college graduates who have bachelor's degrees to teach.

- New Jersey provided alternative routes for superintendents, allowing candidates without prior experience in education to become certified as school superintendents.

Other proposals target the professional growth and development of teachers:

- A coalition of Pennsylvania business, education, government, and human services officials announced the launching of the nation's first institute designed specifically to train teachers to facilitate youth service projects;

- Nevada legislators included funding in the state budget to provide free college credit courses to teachers;

- The Florida legislature approved a school accountability law under which the state will train more than 10,000 educators to prepare school improvement plans.

Certification of educational personnel is one of the traditional tasks of state education agencies. Continued efforts to improve the performance and expand the expertise of educators are predictable state initiatives. Expanding alternative routes to certification and implementing accountability packages that include monitoring of performance mirror activities supported in America 2000. At the same time, trends toward increased professionalism of teachers and school restructuring will introduce the need for a broader array of professional development initiatives.

School Outcomes

Throughout the 1980s, state policy makers in 47 states initiated statewide student testing programs. Following the dissemination of A Nation at Risk, numerous states increased graduation requirements, mandated courses of study, and established performance objectives. Current trends indicate that during the 1990s, states will continue to shift the focus from mandating school inputs to monitoring school outcomes. During the past year, several states mandated state-wide assessments, for example:

- A Utah accountability package includes standardized testing of students in grades 5, 8, and 11, in math, reading, language arts, science, and social studies.

- A proposed Indiana statewide assessment program would ensure that all students master basic academic and work force skills.

Other states are including incentives in their accountability packages:

- Legislatures in Colorado and Kentucky considered incentive programs under which all categories of school employees could share in bonuses if their school exhibited superior performance.

- Texas schools that improve their scores on standardized tests will share nearly $8 million in bonuses. Incentive awards ranging from $10,000 to $100,000 will be given to 279 schools; bonuses can be used at the schools' discretion as long as the money is not earmarked for salary increases or athletics.

Some states have begun discussion of outcomes-based accreditation systems:

- Alabama policy makers have proposed a performance-based accreditation system to assess schools based on student test scores, attendance, and graduation data in addition to the typical input-process standards such as class sizes, school facilities, equipment, textbooks, curricula, teacher training, services for at risk pupils, and community involvement in schools. Standards will have to be met by every school in a district in order for the district to be accredited.

- Iowa policy makers proposed a results-based, voluntary accreditation process for high performing schools.

- New Jersey is implementing a new assessment system to monitor school district management and student performance. The system is intended to make monitoring less burdensome on the state's high achieving districts allowing the state to concentrate on troubled ones.

- Minnesota is shifting more dramatically to an outcomes-based approach. The Minnesota Board of Education gave preliminary approval to a plan to implement outcomes-based high school graduation requirements statewide. The Minnesota legislature has cleared a bill authorizing the establishment of "charter" or outcomes-based schools that would be largely independent of day to day school district control.

These policy initiatives are not without problems. Some policy makers are not convinced of the educational relevance and technical merit of standardized tests. Recognizing the limitations of standardized testing programs, Vermont policy makers began a pilot program for assessment of student performance through the use of portfolios. New York policy makers decided that schools may not use test scores as the only basis for determining students' eligibility for enrichment programs because of serious concerns about race and gender biases.

Testing students is an American pastime. Grounding school improvement initiatives in individual and institutional competition based on standardized test results has been a hallmark of federal educational reform since the beginning of the Reagan Administration. State policy makers will continue to wrestle with the design and implementation of testing programs, including the New American Achievement Test proposed in America 2000, and with the predictable effects on curriculum, instruction, and the school experiences of students.

Curriculum

Discussions about what should be taught in school have always occurred among state-level policy makers. Current initiatives are focusing on the identification of a common core of learning. For example,

- Virginia policy makers are in the midst of a year-long effort to work with educators in developing a common core of learning based on principles of child growth and development with emphases on self development, strategies and skills for learning, and the development of understanding and applications.

- Maine's common core of learning, based on the belief that schools are an integral part of society, identifies four broad categories of skills and attitudes students will need to be productive citizens in the 21st century: personal and global stewardship; communication; reasoning and problem solving; and, the human record.

- Indiana's governor has proposed the development of a common core focused on workplace skills.

- South Carolina's department of education received a $50,000 grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to hold a "curriculum congress" to bring together educators from across all disciplines, parents, and community leaders to determine what students need to know.

- The Georgia Board of Education approved a requirement that schools across the state introduce 35 core values throughout the curriculum at all grade levels and provide students with opportunities to practice what they have learned. Local districts have the leeway to decide how to restructure instruction to highlight such values as freedom of conscience, frugality, tolerance, and moderation. The Georgia Board also approved a course of study about religion for optional use in the state's public schools -- "Living with our Deepest Differences: Religious Liberty in a Pluralistic Society."

These initiatives are consistent with the press to rethink the curriculum advocated in the Paideia proposal, Boyer's report on high schools, Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools, and descriptions of "cultural literacy" proposed by Bloom and Hirsch. Predictably, state policy makers will continue to be confronted with demands from professional educators for new ways of thinking about what is taught in schools. At the same time, the content of the New American Achievement Test and state-level assessment efforts will influence decisions about curriculum.

Improving State Support Systems for Education

As states are becoming more active partners with local education agencies in designing school improvement initiatives, state policy makers are also considering ways of improving state support for local school districts. The two primary areas of activity are school finance and the reorganization of state education agencies.

School Finance

During this period of economic recession, the critical problem confronting state policy makers is the reduction of fiscal inequities among school districts. Some states are considering strategies for redistributing state aid to poorer districts from wealthier districts (e.g., Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Tennessee, Texas). Proposals in Montana sought to limit spending in wealthier districts. Other budget proposals call for reallocation of state funding based on program priorities, i.e., state funding for low priority areas are reallocated to high priority areas. For example:

- A Connecticut proposal would increase funding for programs to desegregate schools and cut funds for model programs designed to improve teaching.
- New York policy makers considered a proposal to expand federal health and childcare benefits for poor children and reduce costs in other areas by lifting state mandates and eliminating the Empire State and Regents Scholarships.
- Policy makers in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin proposed strategies to reduce or limit state spending on special education programs while those in other states proposed increasing state financial support for programs for handicapped and at-risk children.
- Kansas policy makers considered a proposal to drop state funding for gifted and talented programs in favor of those for students with learning disabilities.

All of these proposals are moving slowly through the policy making process. Redistribution of state fiscal resources to reduce fiscal inequities among local school districts is unpopular in wealthier areas; school districts in poor areas are unable to provide appropriate educational services without increased state assistance. Reallocation of state resources from low to high priority program areas creates conflict among winners and losers; policy makers are forced to make choices among a set of equally important program initiatives. At the same time, fiscal shortfalls are blocking the implementation of school improvement policies.

Reorganizing State Agencies

State efforts to improve schools, support school restructuring, respond to the needs of children, and reduce state funding have attracted attention to the structure and function of state education agencies.

- Plans and proposals in Delaware, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, Vermont, and Virginia include a shift in focus from monitoring state-mandated educational inputs to the assessment of educational outcomes.

- Kentucky's legislation to improve schools and support local restructuring efforts included a shift in focus for the state agency from regulation of school districts to technical assistance.

- Virginia's overhaul of the SEA asserts a shift in focus from monitoring to research and technical assistance. However, monitoring activities are continuing in the form of assessment of outcomes.

- SEA reforms in Oklahoma and South Carolina are focusing on streamlining. For example, the Oklahoma State Board of Education approved a plan that would eliminate 64 positions, transfer 22 jobs to other agencies, and dissolve 13 department sections.

- Indiana's governor has proposed a merger of state agencies charged with vocational education, employment and training, and work force literacy.

Summary and Conclusions

Three driving forces will demand educational policy responses throughout the 90's -- crisis in the lives of children and youth, changes in social structure, and national pressure to improve schools.

The real crisis in this country is the condition of children and youth. Poverty, poor health, and racism threaten too many children and the number of children-at-risk increases every year. State-level policy makers are beginning to respond through proposals for inter-sector cooperation in children's services, redistribution of state fiscal resources to poor districts, and curricular innovations designed to maximize opportunities for learning. However, the state of crisis is extreme and the policy proposals to date are too modest to make a difference.

Changes in the social structure place new demands on parents and families to find ways to provide safe, nurturing environments conducive to growth and development for children and youth. New societal roles for women, increasingly mobile families, and economic demands require societal institutions that are more in tune with today's families. Current policy responses are limited to increasing state standards for licensing child care providers and creating more opportunities for early childhood education. But high quality, affordable child care still eludes most families and early education programs are limited to special populations.

America 2000 places national pressure on state educational policy makers to implement policies and programs consistent with the national educational goals and reform agenda. Many of these initiatives will prove problematic to the states as the New American Achievement Test and national standards restrict initiatives and overlook children most in need. At the same time, demands of professional educators for new school structures that produce humane and productive learning communities for teachers and students and new curricula that are responsive and relevant to today's children will continue to require state action.

The responsibilities of state educational policy makers increased dramatically throughout the past decade. The demands of the next decade will again place state policy makers at the center of education initiatives, but the problems they will confront will be national in scope and extend beyond education to health, social welfare, and economic development.

References

1. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, (1990). Current Population Reports, ser, P-60, no. 168, Money, Income, and Poverty Status in the United States, 1989. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, p. 59.

2. United States Conference of Mayors. (1988). A Status Report on Children in America's Cities. Washington, D.C: U.S. Conference of Mayors. p. 53.

3. National Commission on Children. (1991). Beyond Rhetoric: A New American Agenda for Children and Families. Washington, D.C: U.S. Government Printing Office, p. 31.

4. National Commission on Children (1991), p. 31.

5. National Commission on Children (1991), p. 34.

6. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. (1991, April). Youth Indicators 1991: Trends in the Well-Being of American Youth. Washington, D.C: U.S. Government Printing Office, p. 116.

7. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, "Births, Marriages, Divorces, and Deaths for 1990," Monthly Vital Statistics Report 39, No. 7 (supp. Nov. 28, 1990), p. 1.

8. Democratic Study Group. (1991, May). "Why Conservatives Don't Talk About America's Health System," Special Report, No. 102-6, Washington, D.C: Democratic Study Group, U.S. House of Representatives. (p. 25)

9. The Center for the Study of Social Policy. (1991). Kids Count Data Book: State Profiles of Child Well-Being. Washington, D.C: author. (p. 71)

10. U.S. Department of Health & Human Service, National Center for Health Statistics, Health, United States, 1989, Hyattsville, MD: U.S. Department of Health & Social Services, Public Health Service, 1990, pp. 31, 34.

11. Democratic Study Group. (1991, May). "Why Conservatives Don't Talk About America's Health System," Special Report, No. 102-6, Washington, D.C: Democratic Study Group, U.S. House of Representatives. (p. 17)

12. Democratic Study Group. (1991, May). "Why Conservatives Don't Talk About America's Health System," Special Report, No. 102-6, Washington, D.C: Democratic Study Group, U.S. House of Representatives. (p. 18)

13. Reed, S., & Sautter, R.C. (1990, June). "Children of Poverty: The Status of 12 Million Young Americans," Kappan Special Report, Phi Delta Kappan, 71(10), pp. K1-K12. (K6-K7)

14. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. (1991, April). Youth Indicators 1991: Trends in the Well-Being of American Youth. Washington, D.C: U.S. Government Printing Office. (p. 112)

15. Sher, J.P. (no date). North Carolina Today: A State of Emergency, A State of Grace, A State of Anticipation. Chapel Hill, NC: Prepared by Rural Education and Development, Inc. for the North Carolina Association of Educators, p. 12.

16. The Center for the Study of Social Policy. (1991). Kids Count Data Book. Washington, DC: Author, p. 3.

17. National Commission on Children (1991). Beyond Rhetoric: A New American Agenda for Children and Families. Washington, D.C: U.S. Government Printing Office. pp. 223, 225.

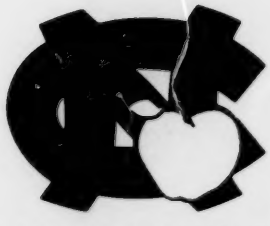
18. National Commission on Children, 1991). Beyond Rhetoric: A New American AGenda for Children and Families. Washington, D.C: U.S. Government Printing Office. p. 223.

19. Lomotey, K. (Ed.)(1990). Going to School: The African American Experience. Albany, NY: State University of New York Prerss, p. 3.

Introducing the Center

The North Carolina Educational Policy Research Center was established in 1991 through a contract to the School of Education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill from the State Board of Education. The mission of the Center is to strengthen the information base for educational policy decisions in North Carolina to enhance outcomes of schooling for children. The Center seeks to accomplish this mission by:

- conducting policy research and analyses;
- preparing research reports examining broad policy issues, policy briefs providing concise information about specific issues, and quarterly newsletters;
- disseminating research-based information on educational policy issues to North Carolina policymakers, educators and community leaders;
- providing a forum for the discussion of educational policy issues; and,
- training future educational leaders in the conduct and use of policy research.



School of Education
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill